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Manuscript Studies

Devotional Poetry in Technical Manuscript Terminology: An Introduction to *The Rose Garden of Purity (Golzār-e Şafā)*

Amir H. Zekrgoo¹ and Mandana Barkeshli²

Abstract

Among the wide variety of Persian manuscript categories, there is a distinctive genre that includes recipes on materials and technics of manuscript production. And within this genre, we come across distinctly interesting works that adopt charming romantic poetry to record subjects that are rather dull, dry, and unattractive to the general audience! One of such historical sources is a sixteenth century manuscript entitled Rose Garden of Purity (Golzār-e Şafā) by ‘Alī Şayrafi, preserved in Paris Central Library. The subject of this research is the manuscript’s impressive Preface in which the poet expresses his sincere devotion to his Creator, and begs for forgiveness – all in melodious poetic language, using technical manuscript terms, colors and pigments as symbols and metaphors. The essay provides an opening remark entitled ‘Manuscripts on Manuscript Production’ followed by and introduction to the manuscript of ‘Golzār-e Şafā (Rose Garden of Purity). The little knowledge extracted about ‘Alī Şayrafi from the manuscript is shared under ‘The Author-cum-Poet.’ ‘Preface with 12 Couplets’ is the focal point of the essay; there the 12 couplets (24 hemistiches) are presented in the original language (Farsi/Persian) along with an English translation that is published here for the first time. A detailed analysis of technical terms used in the Preface, and an elaboration of their symbolic significance, is presented under ‘Expression of Devotion in Technical Manuscript Vocabulary.’

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Keywords: Devotional poetry, Persian manuscript, *Golzār-e Šafā*, Rose Garden of Purity, symbolism, technical terms

Manuscripts on Manuscript Production

Classical Iranian literary sources contain valuable information with respect to materials and techniques related to the art of book-making – including paper, sizing, dyes, and pigments. Some of these writings were composed in the form of mystical poetry, which requires careful research not only into their technical terminology but also their symbolic language.

The period between the ninth AH/fifteenth CE and thirteenth/nineteenth centuries – spanning the reign of the Timurid, Safavid and Qajar dynasties – is remarkable in this regard. Master artisans, who were traditionally occupied with producing artworks and teaching young pupils, began recording their experiences in the form of treatises. The writings of these masters helped to transfer their practical expertise in the arts of the book to their disciples, as well as preserve it for future generations. The majority of such sources were penned by master calligraphers, but in exceptional cases we come across treatises that were written by painters, such as Šādiq Beg Afshār's *The Rulebook of Images (Qānūn al-Šuwar)*, dated 1010/1601.³

These writings are unique in the sense that they were compiled by artists with first-hand knowledge of material production. As such they open up fresh research avenues that can benefit artists, art historians, conservators and scientists alike. They provide access to the material technologies involved in the production of medieval Persian manuscripts and miniature paintings. On a number of occasions, they have led to valuable explorations that reveal the secrets behind the use of certain materials and techniques.⁴

Golzār-e Šafā (Rose Garden of Purity)

One of the prized classical Persian sources on materials and techniques of the art of the book, is *Golzār-e Šafā (Rose Garden of Purity)*. The

³ Mandana Barkeshli, "Paint palette used by Iranian Masters based on Persian medieval recipes," *Restaurator* 34, no. 2, (2013): 101–33.

⁴ Mandana Barkeshli, "PH stability of saffron used in verdigris as an inhibitor in Persian miniature paintings," *Restaurator* 23, (2002): 154–164.

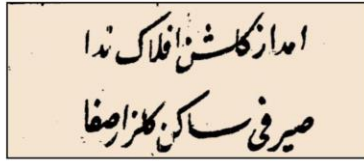
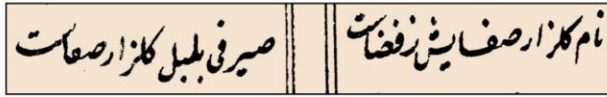
manuscript is remarkable on various grounds. First of all, it contains valuable information with respect to pigments and dyes, as well as related recipes. Secondly, the treatise catches the eyes of scholars of literature because of its 410 rhyming couplets, composed in the *Mathnavī* style of Persian poetry. And finally, the ‘romantic’ color symbolism of the text, expressed in poetic language, is nothing short of remarkable. The poems expose readers to allegorical expressions of various moods and feelings, represented by different shades of colors – a conceit rooted in Persian mystical literature. Hence, the *Rose Garden of Purity* not only provides details on technical aspects of materials and techniques, but also touches upon feelings that are symbolically associated with color tones. As for the textual history of the *Rose Garden of Purity*, the only known manuscript is preserved in Paris Central Library (no. P.1656); a microfilm version of the same is available in Tehran University’s Central Library (no. 3637). The content of the manuscript was edited for the first time in 1349sh/1970 by Mohammad Taqī Danesh-Pazhuh in the Tehran-based journal *Honar va-mardom*.⁵

The Author-cum-Poet

The manuscript is commonly attributed to one ‘Alī Şayrafī, but there has been doubts about whether this actually is the author’s real name. The real name of the author, as well as the date and the place of his birth or demise, cannot be confirmed with certainty. What we do know, however, is that the *Rose Garden of Purity* was composed in the sixteenth century, a time in which a number of Safavid masters and famous painters were active.

There are two couplets towards the end of the manuscript where the name Şayrafī appears two times. In the same couplets the romantic title of the book (*Rose Garden of Purity*) appears three times, where the poet makes a mystical bond between the heavenly garden and the *Rose Garden of Purity*, and introduces himself as the singing bird residing in the latter. (Figure 1)

⁵ The edition by Danesh-Pazhuh was later revised twice, once by Najib Mayel Heravi in 1372sh/1993 and again by Hamid Reza Qelich-khani in 1373sh/1994. The main source for all these editions has been the Tehran University Library microfilm.



Figures 1: The name of the author/poet (Şayrafî) appears in the above couplets. There he refers to himself as “the Nightingale of the Rose Garden of Purity,” and “Resident of the Rose Garden of Purity”

The couplets shown in Figure 1 are presented below followed by their English translation.

نام گلزار صفایش ز فضاست صیرفی بلبل گلزار صفات
آمد از گلشن افلاک ندا صیرفی ساکن گلزار صفا

*From heaven came the name ‘Rose Garden of Purity’,
Şayrafî is the nightingale of the Rose Garden of Purity.
From the heavenly garden a statement was bestowed,
The Rose Garden of Purity is Şayrafî’s abode.⁶*

The first name ‘Alî is also mentioned but with great ambiguity whether the author is referring to himself or pointing at a third person. Some sources have indicated that ‘Alî was perhaps the name of a close friend of his youth, and that Şayrafî devoted his work to him due to his longing during his old age⁷ – an opinion that we beg to disagree! In the last page of *Golzār-e Şafā* the name ‘Alî is mentioned in a manner that could be understood as being the author’s own name. There he claims that he is blessed with the name ‘Alî who is his guardian (Walî).⁸ (Figure 2)

⁶ ‘Alî Şayrafî, *Golzār-e Şafā*, Translation into English by Amir H. Zekrgoo.

⁷ Najib Mayel Heravi, “Preface,” in *Ketāb-ārāyī dar tamaddun-e Eslāmī* (Book Decoration in Islamic Civilization), ed. Najib Mayel Heravi, Mashhad: Islamic Research Centre of Astān-i Quds-i Razavī, 1372sh/1993, 62-63.

⁸ The Arabic term *walī* means ‘guardian’ and ‘friend’. Imam ‘Alî, the cousin and

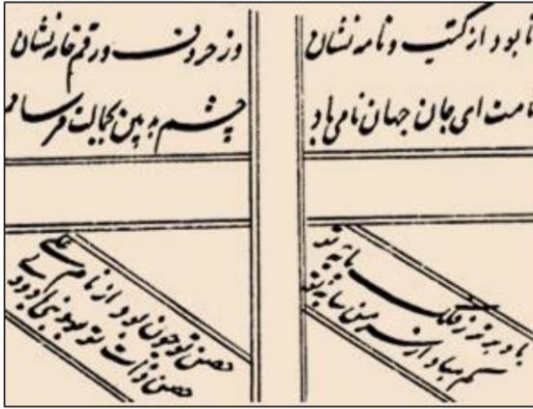


Figure 2: ‘Alī Şayrafī, in the last page of the *Golzār-e Şafā*, expresses his deep satisfaction for having the name ‘Alī, which he praises and claims to be his protector/guardian (*walī*) alongside the Prophet (*nabī*).

The couplets shown in Figure 2 are presented below along with an English translation.

وز حروف و رقمِ خامه نشان	تا بود از کُتَب و نامه نشان
چشم بدبین به جمالت مرساد	نامت ای جانِ جهانِ نامی باد
کم مباد از سرِ من سایه تو	باد برتر ز فلک پایه تو
حصن ذات تو نبی باد و ولی	حصن تو چون بود از نامِ علی

*As long as there's a sign of books and letters,
And traces of writing, pen, and signatures
May your name, O world's heart, rise high,
Your beauty may never be touched by evil-eye
Higher than the heaven, your position may grow,
From over my head may never leave your shadow
Protected when you are with the name of 'Ali,
Your soul will be shielded by the Prophet and the Walī.⁹*

son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad and the first *Shi'ah* Imam is often addressed as *Walī Allah* (friend of God).

⁹ ‘Alī Şayrafī, *Golzār-e Şafā*.

In the above couplets, the poet has adopted manuscript-related terms, such as *books*, *letters*, *writing*, *pen*, and *signature*, to convey his message – an intentional practice throughout the manuscript.

Preface in 12 Couplets

Şayrafî engaged his imagination to create an artistic connection between colors, natural elements and technical terms on the one hand, and love-related moods, feelings and emotions on the other hand. The sun, the moon, the heaven and the earth, trees, stones and gems, and the process of creation are imaginatively tied to book-making technical terms in the *Rose garden of Purity*. Using colours, dyes, tools, and the technical process of colour making as his medium, Şayrafî displays the bitter-sweet contrast of emotions in an admirable way. We hope to display these characteristics of *Golzār-e Şafā* in another essay.

The subject of this research is the manuscript's impressive *Preface* in which the poet expresses his sincere devotion to his Creator. This is nothing out of the norm, since devotional passages at the beginning of books have been a common trait in Persian literature for many centuries. One can hardly find a single manuscript, regardless of the subject, that does not begin with a vote of praise to the Almighty, the Prophet, his household, and the Imāms. In fact, devotional praise (*madh*) was so popular that numerous books of poetry and prose were entirely dedicated to it.¹⁰ Due to its appeal to the heart of the devoted, and the power of evoking religious emotions, this genre gained widespread popularity. The practice was not limited to books and manuscripts; it extended to a wide variety of documents – from lavish royal decrees to modest marriage contracts.¹¹ The culture is still alive, though with less degree of commitment!

¹⁰ See for example Amir H. Zekrgoo, "Devotional poetry, exceptional calligraphy, charming manuscript: expression of religious emotion in Ḥassan Kāshī's *Haft-Band*", in *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 27, Number 2 (2022): 371-95. <https://journals.iium.edu.my/shajarah/index.php/shaj/article/view/1502>.

¹¹ For praise literature in marriage contracts see: Amir H. Zekrgoo, *The Sacred Art of Marriage – Persian Marriage Certificates of the Qajar Dynasty*, Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2000, 10-11.

The *Preface* of *Golzār-e Šafā* is composed in twelve couplets, a symbolic expression of respect to the twelve Imams. (Figure 3)



Figure 3: Opening pages of *Golzār-e Šafā*, Tehran Central Library, microfilm no. 3637, fol. 56v-72r [1. Preface = fol. 56v, l. 1 – 57r, l. 4]

What follows is the original text (12 couplets of the Preface shown in *Figure 3*) followed by an English translation of the couplets that are published here for the first time. We have tried to maintain the *vazn va qāfiyah* (melodious tempo and rhyme) of the poetry – an essential feature of the original Persian couplets – so as to convey to the reader the aesthetic value of the text. The manuscript-related terms appear in a different color for easy reference.

<p>حمد تو لوحهٔ دیوان سخن صفحهٔ صبح زر افشان از تو نقره افشان تو کنی از کوکب آوری کاغذ رعنا پیکر وز شفق کاغذ گلگون سازی ورق لاله ز تو گلناری تو دهی نسخهٔ گلشن تزئین زعفرانی ز تو روی من زار زرد رخساره ز تکثیر گناه مرحمت کن به حق آل عبا مجرمان را بشود روی سیاه صفحهٔ روی مرا ساز سفید</p>	<p>ای مُدَّهَب ز تو عنوان سخن زینت دفتر دوران از تو لاجوردی ورق روز به شب نور خورشید و شفق شام و سحر نامهٔ شام دگرگون سازی صفحهٔ باغ ز تو ژنگاری تو کنی دفتر گلبن رنگین ارغوانی ز تو رخسارهٔ یار من کیم دلشدهٔ نامه سیاه بر من نامه سیه لطف نما اندر آن روز که از مشق گناه مکن از لطف جمیلم نومید</p>
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*The illuminated heading of any discourse is Your¹² name,
Your praise is every speech's adorning frame.*

*The book of ages gets its decoration from You,
The gold-sprinkled page of sunrise is created by You.*

*You decorate the lapis lazuli pages of day at night,
Adorned with silver-sprinkled stars, pleasant to the sight.*

*With the rays of sun, at the times of dusk and dawn,
You present to the spectators a charming page of lawn.*

¹² The words "You" and "Your" have been capitalized throughout the translated version, because they point to God – the ultimate Beloved.

*You transform the **book of night** [by using a different shade],
And paint the **rosy page** of dawn, with the sun's shiny blade.*

*The **page of garden** gets its **Verdigris** hue from You,
The **colour of pomegranate-blossom** on **tulip's folio** is from You.*

*To the **rose bush booklet**, You add a colourful hue,
The **manuscript of rose garden** too is decorated by You.*

*You coloured my beloved's cheeks in a **deep pinkish shade**,
And in pale **shade of saffron** my distressed face You made.*

*Who am I? A heartbroken soul with a **black letter** of deeds!
An ashamed yellow-faced fellow, sinful in the **book** of creeds.*

*Be kind to me O Lord, with this **black book** of shame!
Have mercy on me, in the Family of the Prophet's name.*

*In that Day, those with sins in their **exercise book**,
Will appear with **black face** – a horrible shameful look!*

*Don't dishearten me O Lord, from Your merciful grace,
Make **white** again the **page** of my shameful face.¹³*

Expression of Devotion in Technical Manuscript Terminology

In the following table, each of the twelve couplets of the *Preface* is presented in a separate row. In the right column the couplets are presented individually with the technical terms highlighted in red font; an elaboration of the couplets' metaphoric expression and symbolic significance follows. The left column contains technical terms extracted from the respective couplet, along with their meanings.

¹³ Couplets translated into English by Amir H. Zekrgoo.

Terms / Meaning	Couplets Symbolic use of technical terms
<p>مُدَّهَبٌ (<i>mudhahab</i>) Illuminated</p> <p>لَوْحَةٌ دِيْوَانٍ (<i>lowḥah-e divān</i>) Decorated framework of opening page of a book of poetry.</p> <p><u>Lawhah</u> (=tablet) in manuscript terminology is often used for a decorated page of significance which is highly illuminated.</p> <p><u>Divān/ Diwān</u>: Book of poetry</p>	<p><u>Couplet 1:</u></p> <p><i>The illuminated heading of any discourse is Your name, Your praise is every speech's adorning frame.</i></p> <p>The practice of beginning every sermon, action, and writing with the name of God is a deeply rooted and widely practiced culture throughout the Muslim world. The preface of almost all Persian manuscripts features a preface comprising praise and thanksgiving to the Almighty. The opening pages of the prefaces are usually the most decorated ones, with illuminations that resemble a beautiful gate that frames the text.</p> <p>This tradition has reference to the very first experience of Divine revelation by Prophet Muhammad – the first Qur’anic verse that commanded him to: “<i>Read, in the name of your Lord</i>” (Qur’an 96:1).</p>
<p>زینتِ دفتر (<i>zinat-e daftar</i>) Book decoration</p> <p>صفحة زر افشان (<i>ṣafḥa-e zar afshān</i>) Gold sprinkled page</p>	<p><u>Couplet 2:</u></p> <p><i>The book of ages gets its decoration from You, The gold-sprinkled page of sunrise is created by You</i></p> <p>Here, periods of history are compared to pages of beautiful manuscripts. Sunrise (beginning) of each age is equated to a page that is shaped and beautified by the Creator, and sprinkled with the golden rays of sun.</p> <p><u>Gold-sprinkling</u> is a technique used to enrich the surface of papers after dying them. Gold-sprinkled papers are generally used for highly valuable manuscripts such as royal copies.</p>

<p>لاجوردی (<i>lājevardī</i>) Colour of Lapis lazuli/ Ultramarine</p> <p>ورق (<i>varaḡ</i>) Page/folio</p> <p>نقره افشان (<i>noḡreh afshān</i>) Silver sprinkled</p>	<p><u>Couplet 3:</u></p> <p><i>You decorate the lapis lazuli pages of day at night, Adorned with silver-sprinkled stars, pleasant to the sight.</i></p> <p>This couplet describes day and night as pages of a manuscript that are painted in deep and light shades of lapis lazuli. The Ultimate Artist adopted silver-sprinkling technique to add stars to the deep-blue evening sky.</p> <p><u>Lapis lazuli</u> is a deep-blue semi-precious stone from which Ultramarine pigment is made. It is a popular colour in Persian art of illumination and miniature painting. Lapis has been used to make artefacts as early as 7570 BCE.</p> <p><u>Silver-sprinkling</u> is a technique used to enrich the surface of papers after dyeing them.</p>
<p>کاغذ رعنا پیکر (<i>kāghaz-e ra'nā peykar</i>) Page dyed in (multiple) charming colours</p>	<p><u>Couplet 4:</u></p> <p><i>With the rays of sun, at the times of dusk and dawn, You present to the spectators a charming page of lawn.</i></p> <p>The play of rays of light on the bed of grass at the times of sunrise and sunset is compared to a manuscript page that the Artist-Creator has dyed in multiple colour tones.</p>

<p>نامهٔ شام (<i>nāmeḥ-e shām</i>) Book of night</p> <p>کاغذ گلگون (<i>kāghaz-e golgūn</i>) Rosy paper/page</p>	<p><u>Couplet 5:</u></p> <p><i>You transform the book of night [by using a different shade], And paint the rosy page of dawn, with the sun's shiny blade.</i></p> <p>Night and day are compared to pages dyed in various shades. In order to give dawn a dramatic touch, the Artist adds a rosy stroke borrowed from sun's morning rays.</p>
<p>صفحهٔ باغ (<i>ṣafḥe-e bāgh</i>) Page of garden</p> <p>ژنگاری / زنگاری (<i>zangārī</i>) Verdigris</p> <p>گلناری (<i>golnārī¹⁴</i>) Bright red: colour of pomegranate blossom/flower</p> <p>ورق لاله (<i>varaḡ-e lāleh</i>) Folio of tulip</p>	<p><u>Couplet 6:</u></p> <p><i>The page of garden gets its Verdigris hue from You, The colour of pomegranate-blossom on tulip's folio is from You.</i></p> <p>Garden is compared to a page that is painted green with Verdigris pigment. On the green background, tulips are painted with bright red colours resembling pomegranate flowers.</p> <p><u>Verdigris</u> or <i>zangār</i> is a substance typically produced by treating copper or copper-alloys with vinegar. The term specifically refers to copper acetate, which is broadly applied to any green or blue corrosion product of copper. Verdigris pigment has destructive effect on paper; it has damaged many artworks, especially in India and Europe. Persian artisans had discovered that adding saffron to the pigment will put an end to its corrosive effect.¹⁵</p>

¹⁴ The compound word *golnārī* is a short form of *gol+anār+i*, which literally means 'similar to pomegranate flower.'

¹⁵ See Mandana Barkeshli, "PH stability of saffron used in verdigris as an inhibitor in Persian miniature paintings," in *Restaurator* 23.

<p>دفتر گلبن (<i>daftar-e golbon</i>) Rose bush booklet</p> <p>نسخه گلشن (<i>noskkeh-e golshan</i>) Manuscript of rose garden</p>	<p><u>Couplet 7:</u></p> <p><i>To the rose bush booklet, You add a colourful hue, The manuscript of rose garden too is decorated by You</i></p> <p><i>A garden with flowers is portrayed as a rose-bush booklet, while the colourful rose garden is likened to a highly decorated manuscript.</i></p>
<p>ارغوانی (<i>arghavānī</i>) Deep-pink /purplish <i>Arghavānī</i> comes from <i>Arghavān</i> (Judas-tree) that produces beautiful flowers in various shades of pink and purple.</p> <p>زعفرانی (<i>za'farānī</i>) (Saffron-like) is a bright yellow colour produced by soaking saffron in hot water.</p>	<p><u>Couplet 8:</u></p> <p><i>You coloured my beloved's cheeks in a deep pinkish shade, And in pale shade of saffron, my distressed face You made!</i></p> <p>The hues red (rosy) and yellow (saffron) are symbolically adopted to exhibit the contrast between the condition (wellbeing) of a 'lover' and the subject of love – the 'beloved'. While the former suffers the painful yearning for the beloved, the latter is full of life, enjoying her beauty and charm.</p> <p><i>Arghavānī</i> (pink or rosy), in Persian love poetry is often used to describe the beautiful face of the beloved.</p> <p><i>Za'farānī</i> (saffron-like = yellow) on the other hand, represents the colour of the face of lovers who are in constant pain of longing and separation.</p>

<p>نامه سیاه (<i>nāmeḥ sīyāḥ</i>) Black book/letter</p>	<p><u>Couplet 9:</u></p> <p><i>Who am I? A heartbroken soul with a black letter of deeds! Shameful yellow-faced fellow, sinful in the book of creeds.</i></p> <p>‘Black letter’ is a metaphor for a transcript of deeds that testifies to one’s failure. Having a black letter of deeds in the Day of Judgement, will bring embarrassment to the holder, and turns the colour of his face to yellow – a symbol of shame, pain and distress.</p>
<p>نامه سیه (<i>nāmeḥ sīyah</i>) Black book/letter</p>	<p><u>Couplet 10:</u></p> <p><i>Be kind to me O Lord, with this black book of shame! Have mercy on me, in the Family of the Prophet’s name.</i></p> <p>Those who fail the test of life, and are presented with their ‘black book of shame,’ deserve severe punishment. They can only be saved if God extends His mercy to them!</p> <p>The poet humbly presents himself as an ashamed sinner; he accepts his failure and expresses regret. He then asks for God’s forgiveness by resorting to mediation of the holy Prophet and his esteemed family.</p>
<p>مشق (<i>mashq</i>) Exercise (in calligraphy exercise book)</p>	<p><u>Couplet 11:</u></p> <p><i>In that Day, those with sins in their exercise book, Will appear with black face – a horrible shameful look!</i></p>

	<p>Life is compared to an exercise book in which all deeds are registered by angels! Each person will be presented with his/her book in the Day of Judgement. This document of recorded actions will cause the holders pride or embarrassment. Naturally the sinners (the holders of the ‘black book of shame’) will appear with a darkened remorseful face.</p>
<p>صفحة سفید (<i>şafhe-e sefid</i>) White page</p>	<p><u>Couplet 12:</u></p> <p><i>Don't dishearten me O Lord from Your merciful grace, Make white again the page of my shameful face.</i></p> <p>In the last couplet, the poet begs the Lord for forgiveness, in the hope that his darkened shameful face will be lightened like a clean white page by the transforming touch of God's grace.</p>

Conclusion

An outstanding value of Persian poetry, as compared to the poetries in other languages, is that it flows like a stream in and out of books that were compiled in almost all fields of knowledge. This statement is more accurate in the historical books and less applicable to the contemporary literature. Regardless of the subject matter – be it astronomy, psychology, religion, philosophy, or simply instructions for paper dying, paint-mixing and book-making – Persian poems add two distinct flavours to the background text: “religious devotion” and “romantic spirit.” Understanding Persian poetry, to a large extent, depends on having some knowledge of symbolic terms and metaphoric expressions in a certain context. A wonderful example is the twelve-couplet preface of the sixteenth century manuscript of *Golzār-e Şafā – The Rose Garden of Purity*. There, ‘Alī Şayrafī, the

author-cum-poet, creatively employs technical terms used in manuscript production to express his religious conviction in a lyrical language. What follows is a summary of the selected terms and their symbolic connotations.

A rose garden is compared to an illuminated page (*mudhahab*). Praising God Almighty at the beginning of every conversation is compared to a highly decorated opening page of a book of poetry (*lawḥah-e divan*). Each period of history (*dawrān*) is compared to a booklet (*daftar*). The sunrise is compared to a gold sprinkled page (*ṣafḥa-e zar afshān*). Day and night are each folios (*varaḡ*) in the book of time. The countless stars in the deep blue sky at night is equated to a page that is coloured with Lapis lazuli (*lājevard*) and then silver sprinkled (*noqreh afshān*). The dramatic change of sky colour from dawn to dusk is likened to a manuscript page that is dyed in multiple charming colours (*kāghaz-e ra'nā peykar*). The early morning sky with reddish rays of the sun is exhibited as rose-like paper (*kāghaz-e golgūn*). Garden is presented as a page (*ṣafḥe-e bāgh*) that is painted in green Verdigris shade (*zangārī*). The red tulip (*lāleh*) is compared to a folio (*varaḡ-e lāleh*) that has the colour of pomegranate blossom/flower (*golnārī*). A garden with flowers is portrayed as a rose-bush booklet (*daftar-e golbon*), while a rose garden is likened to an illuminated manuscript (*noskkeh-e golshan*). The rosy face of the beloved is portrayed as the colour of the flower of Judas tree (*arghavānī*), while the pale face of the suffering lover is compared to the colour of dye extracted from saffron (*za'farānī*). The record of one's sinful acts is symbolically presented as black book/letter (*nāmeḥ sīyāh/sīyah*) in which is registered the persons 'exercise of sins' (*mashq-e gonāh*). Portraying someone's face as a 'white page' (*ṣafḥe-e sefid*) denotes the person's clean conscience, while a black face/page (*rūy-e siyāh*) symbolizes embarrassment due to wrong conducts.

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	
ء	ب	پ	پ	ز	ز	ز	ز	گ	—	g	g	g
ب	ب	ب	ب	ژ	—	—	ř	ل	l	l	l	l
پ	پ	پ	پ	ژ	—	zh	j	م	m	m	m	m
ت	ت	ت	ت	س	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n	n
ث	—	—	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ş	ه	h	h	h ¹	h ¹
ث	th	th	th	ص	ş	ş	ş	و	w	v/u	v	v/u
ج	j	j	c	ض	ḏ	ḏ	ž	ی	y	y	y	y
چ	—	ch	çh	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ة	-ah	—	—	-a ²
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al ³	—	—	—
خ	kh	kh	kh	ع	‘	‘	‘	—	—	—	—	—
د	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğh	—	—	—	—	—
ڈ	—	—	d	ف	f	f	f	—	—	—	—	—
ذ	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	k	—	—	—	—	—
ر	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	—	—	—	—	—

¹ – when not final

² – at in construct state

³ – (article) al - or l-

VOWELS

	Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	—
	و	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī
Doubled	ي	iy (final form i)	iy (final form i)
	و	uww (final form ū) uvv (for Persian)	uvv
Diphthongs	و	au or aw	ev
	ی	ai or ay	ey
Short	ا	a	a or e
	و	u	u or ū
	ی	i	o or ö
	ی	i	i

URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g. چ jh گ gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.

AL-SHAJARAH

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